

Edward Steichen and World War II Navy Photography

Abstract

After working with Alfred Stieglitz in the early 1900s to establish photography as an art form, Edward Steichen (1879–1973) in the 1920s and 1930s became a premier fashion photographer and then comfortably retired to raise flowers on his large Connecticut estate. When World War II started, Steichen became the oldest commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy and eventually was promoted to become the head of all Navy photography. After the war, Steichen was appointed Director of Photography for the Museum of Modern Art, New York, where he curated numerous exhibitions, including “The Family of Man,” seen by millions around the world. This lecture focuses on his WWII years, when he put together a team of exceptional photographers to document the Navy’s role in the war, especially in the Pacific, and personally took some of the pictures published in magazines, books, and his friend Tom Maloney’s *U.S. Camera Annual*.

Bio

Gary D. Saretzky, archivist, educator, and photographer, worked as an archivist for more than fifty years at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Educational Testing Service, and the Monmouth County Archives, from which he retired in 2019. Saretzky also taught the history of photography at Mercer County Community College, 1977–2012, and served as coordinator of the Public History Internship Program for the Rutgers University History Department, 1994–2016. He has published more than 100 articles, including “U.S. Camera: A Thomas J. Maloney Chronology,” *The Photo Review* (2004), and other publications on the history of photography, photographic conservation, and diverse topics. Saretzky lectures regularly throughout New Jersey and maintains a website, <http://saretzky.com>, which also includes his photographs, lecture schedule, and history of photography resources.